

REMARKS

Claims

Upon entry of this Amendment, claims 28 and 29 will be pending in the application with claim 28 being independent. Claims 28 and 29 have been amended. Claims 1-27 have previously been canceled. No claims have been added. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claim Objections

Claims 28 and 29 stand objected to because of the following informalities: On line 11 of claim 28 it reads "moveably" and should be changed to --movably--. On line 16 of claim 28 it reads "at least engaging" and should rather read --at least one engaging--. On line 1 of claim 29 it reads "The surgical saw blade coupler of Claim 1" and should rather read --The surgical saw blade coupler of claim 28---. Applicant has amended claims 28 and 29 to overcome these objections.

Clarifying Amendments

Applicant has amended claim 28 to clarify the invention set forth therein by using terms that are more consistent with the specification. In particular, Applicant has amended claim 28 to recite "locking portion" instead of "drive portion" and Applicant has amended claim 28 to simply recite "slot" instead of "blade slot". It should be appreciated by the Examiner that the scope of claim 28 is not affected by these amendments as the replacement terms have the same meaning as the terms being replaced.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

Claim 28 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Trott (U.S. Patent No. 5,729,904). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection to claim 28.

Independent claim 28 recites a surgical saw blade coupler 10 comprising a housing 14 having a body and a head that extends forward from the body. The head has

a face and a through bore. A driver 22 includes a driven portion 46 disposed in the housing and configured to be attached to a drive unit and a locking portion 48 disposed over the face of the head. The locking portion 48 has a through opening aligned with the through bore. The locking portion 48 also includes at least one engaging member 52A-52D. A pin 20 extends through the through bore and the through opening. The pin 20 has a head portion 26 disposed over the locking portion 48. The head portion 26 has an opening 38A-38D aligned over and positioned to receive the at least one engaging member 52A-52D. The pin 20 is movably mounted to the housing 14 so as to be able to move longitudinally in the through bore and the through opening. A cap 18 is mounted to the pin 20 so as to be spaced above the head portion 26 of the pin 20 to define a slot 44 between the head portion 26 and the cap 18 for receiving a surgical saw blade 12. Finally, a biasing member 96 acts between the head of the housing and the pin 20 for urging the head portion 26 of the pin 20 and the cap 18 towards the at least one engaging member 52A-52D.

Trott discloses a surgical saw blade coupler 10 comprising a housing 12 having a body and a head 28 that extends forward from the body. The head has a face and a through bore. A driver includes a driven portion 29 disposed in the housing 12 and configured to be attached to a drive unit and a locking portion 20 disposed over the face of the head. The locking portion 20 has a through opening 42 aligned with the through bore. The locking portion 20 also includes a plurality of projecting pins 32. A push shaft 40 extends through the through bore and the through opening 42. The push shaft 40 has a clamping head 43 disposed over a clamping surface 30 of the locking portion 20. The clamping head 43 is aligned over the projecting pins 32. The push shaft 40 is movably mounted to the housing 12 so as to be able to move longitudinally in the through bore and the through opening. A biasing member 26 acts between the locking portion 20 and the push shaft 40 for urging the clamping head 43 of the push shaft 40 towards the projecting pins 32.

Trott does not disclose a cap mounted to the push shaft 40 so as to be spaced above the clamping head 43 of the push shaft 40 to define a slot between the clamping head 43 and the cap for receiving a surgical saw blade, as required by independent claim

28. Instead, in Trott, the surgical saw blade 14 is simply placed in registration with the projecting pins 32 and then held in place on the projecting pins 32 by the clamping head 43. There is no slot for initially receiving the blade 14 and securing the blade 14 longitudinally before placing the blade 14 in registration with the projecting pins 32. Conversely, with the invention set forth in claim 28, the surgical saw blade 12 is first slid into position in the slot 44 between the cap 18 and the head portion 26 of the pin 20, then the cap 18 and the head portion 26 of the pin 20 are released and urged toward the at least one engaging member 52A-52D so that the at least one engaging member 52A-52D passes through BOTH the opening 38A-38D in the head portion 26 of the pin 20 and an opening 68A-68E in the blade 12. This is best illustrated by the following side-by-side comparison of Trott with one embodiment of the invention set forth in claim 28. It should be appreciated that use of the embodiment set forth below is for example and illustration purposes only and claim 28 should not be interpreted as being limited to this particular embodiment.

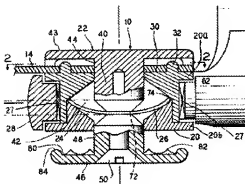


FIG. 1 of Trott

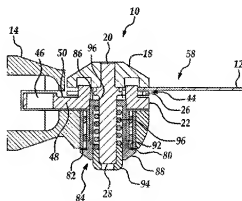


FIG. 3 of subject application

As shown in FIG. 1 of Trott, the projecting pins 32 extend through openings in the surgical saw blade 14 to secure the blade 14 laterally while the clamping portion 43 of the push shaft 40 clamps the blade 14 against the clamping surface 30 of the housing 20 to secure the blade 14 longitudinally. Conversely, as shown in FIG. 3 of the subject application, the at least one engaging member (not labeled) extends through BOTH the

head portion 26 of the pin 20 and openings in the surgical saw blade 12 to secure the blade 12 laterally, while the blade 12 is secured longitudinally between the cap 18 and the head portion 26, not between the head portion 26 and the locking portion 48, as shown in Trott.

In summary, Trott fails to disclose, teach, or suggest a cap mounted to a pin so as to be spaced above a head portion of the pin to define a slot between the head portion and the cap for receiving a surgical saw blade, as required by independent claim 28. For this reason Trott does not anticipate each and every limitation required by independent claim 28. Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claim 28 is in condition for allowance. Applicant also submits that dependent claim 29 is in condition for allowance based on its own merits and its dependency on claim 28 and the failure of the references to suggest claim 28.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claim 29 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Trott in view of Evans (U.S. Patent No. 5,263,972). For the reasons given above with respect to the patentability of claim 28 and the dependency of claim 29 on claim 28, this rejection is now moot.

Applicant believes the application is now in condition for allowance, which allowance is respectfully solicited. Applicant believes that no additional fees are required. However, the Commissioner is authorized to charge our Deposit Account No. 08-2789 for any additional fees or credit the account for any overpayment.

Respectfully submitted,
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February 2, 2007
Date

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